

## Message Text

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ACTION EB-07

INFO OCT-01 ARA-10 EUR-12 NEA-10 IO-10 ISO-00 TRSE-00

COME-00 INT-05 CIAE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 OES-05 /067 W

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R 240748Z JUN 75

FM AMEMBASSY MADRID

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2244

INFO AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY ALGIERS

AMEMBASSY ANKARA

AMEMBASSY BELGRADE

AMEMBASSY LIMA

AMEMBASSY MEXICO

AMEMBASSY OTTAWA

USMISSION GENEVA

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMCONSUL BARCELONA

AMCONSUL BILBAO

UNCLAS MADRID 4375

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EMIN, ETRD, SP

SUBJ: INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF MERCURY PRODUCERS (ASSIMER)

REF : A) STATE 114507 B) GENEVA 4059; C) ROME 8506;

D) MADRID 7605 (4 DEC. 74)

1. EMBOFF CALLED ON ANSELMO TORRES, TECHNICAL DIRECTOR STATE-OWNED ALMADEN MINE, LARGEST MERCURY MINING OPERATION IN THE WORLD, TO DISCUSS RECENT DEVELOPMENTS IN MERCURY PRODUCERS ASSOCIATION (ASSIMER). TORRES HAS BEEN SPANISH REPRESENTATIVE TO MOST INTERNATIONAL MEETINGS CONCERNING MERCURY.

2. TORRES REITERATED HIS EARLIER COMMENTS (REF D) ON MERCURY PRODUCERS' ORGANIZATION (ASSIMER). SPAIN SEES MAIN GOAL TO BE IMPROVEMENT OF POOR MARKET CAUSED MAINLY BY  
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EXAGGERATED ATTACK BY ENVIRONMENTALISTS AGAINST MERCURY

AND REINSTATEMENT OF IT AS WIDELY USED, VALUABLE RAW MATERIAL. TORRES BELIEVES MERCURY "HAS TURNED THE CORNER" IN ITS FIGHT FOR RENEWED ACCEPTANCE POINTING OUT THAT IN GENERALLY BAD ECONOMIC CONDITIONS OF 1974, MERCURY CONSUMPTION INCREASED BY HIS ESTIMATE SOME TEN PERCENT. TO ASSIST IN PROMOTION OF MERCURY CONSUMPTION, TORRES EXPECTS ASSIMER TO FORM THE INTERNATIONAL MERCURY INSTITUTE THIS SUMMER. MAIN PURPOSES WILL BE TO DEVELOP NEW USES FOR MERCURY AND IMPROVED SAFETY GUIDELINES FOR ITS USE.

3. TORRES SAID ASSIMER MEMBERS ARE COMPANIES, NOT GOVERNMENTS. HOWEVER, ALL MEMBERS EXCEPT MEXICAN PRODUCERS ARE STATE-OWNED ENTERPRISES. LARGE NUMBER SMALL MEXICAN PRODUCERS ARE FORMING ONE NATIONAL GROUP TO ACT AS THEIR MEMBER OF ASSIMER. EACH MEMBER HAS ONE VOTE AND WILL CONTRIBUTE AN EQUAL SHARE FOR EXPENSES OF ASSIMER AND THE INSTITUTE.

4. TORRES SAID SPAIN HAS SUCCESSFULLY FOUGHT EFFORTS BY OTHER MEMBERS TO USE ASSIMER AS A PRICE FIXING MECHANISM. ALMADEN CONSIDERS FREE MARKET FORCES EFFECTIVE IN DRIVING OUT LESS EFFICIENT PRODUCERS, LEAVING MARKET TO MORE VIABLE PRODUCERS WITH ALMADEN THE LEADER IN THE FIELD. IT SEES NO BENEFIT IN PROTECTING INEFFICIENT PRODUCERS BY INSTITUTING PRICES ABOVE THOSE SET BY THE MARKET AND GUARANTEEING THEM BY RESTRICTING ITS SHARE OF THE MARKET. IN SHORT, ALMADEN IS WELL PLACED TO SURVIVE A "WEEDING-OUT" OF MARGINAL PRODUCERS AND SUBSEQUENTLY GAIN AN EVEN BIGGER SHARE OF THE MARKET.

5. COMMENT: SPAIN'S MAIN INTEREST IN MERCURY PRODUCERS' COOPERATION REMAINS POLLING RESOURCES TO PROMOTE USE OF MERCURY. IT IS THE WORLD'S LARGEST PRODUCER AND SUPPLIER, THUS ANY PRODUCERS' GROUP MUST HAVE ITS FULL COOPERATION. AS LONG AS SPAIN SEES PRICES SET BY FREE MARKET FORCES BEING IN ITS BEST INTERESTS, IT WILL CONTINUE TO FEND OFF EFFORTS TO USE ASSIMER OR ANY OTHER GROUP AS A PRICE FIXING CARTEL.

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**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
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**TAGS:** EMIN, ETRD, SP, ASSIMER  
**To:** STATE  
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